

STATE OF GEORGIA

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Sonny Perdue
GOVERNOR

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**Governor Perdue Announces Land Conservation Grants and
Loans**

Funding Approved for Projects in Glynn and Walton Counties

ATLANTA – Governor Sonny Perdue announced today the approval of two Georgia Land Conservation Program (GLCP) grants and one low interest loan. Glynn and Walton Counties will receive land conservation grants. Glynn County will also receive a low interest land conservation loan.

“This program and its shared funding represent a collaborative approach to land conservation,” said Governor Sonny Perdue. “I’m pleased that these natural and cultural resources will be preserved and enjoyed for generations to come.”

Along Georgia’s coast in Glynn County, a 21-acre track of coastal marsh property will be acquired adjacent to the 250-acre Fort Frederica National Monument. Established in 1736, Fort Frederica is one of the earliest English settlements in Georgia. The property is approximately one-half upland and one-half marsh. It includes a large and undeveloped Native American shell midden dating to 1,000 B.C. Native vegetation, including salt marsh and maritime forest, provides habitat for priority species including wood storks, diamondback terrapins, bald eagles and mock bishopweed.

Protection of this property will prevent large scale development and maintain the scenic qualities and viewshed of the national monument. The St. Simons Land Trust will

hold the property initially. When the National Park Service acquires the funds to purchase the 21 acres the property will become part of the national monument. GLCP is contributing a \$750,000 grant and a \$2,750,000 low interest loan. Additional funding is being provided by the Sea Island Company and the St. Simons Land Trust.

“Preserving this beautiful and historic land for future generations is the right decision for Glynn County and for Georgia,” said Representative Jerry Keen. “I am pleased that we have all been able to work together to protect this pristine site for years to come.”

Near Social Circle in Walton County, two conservation easements are being acquired to protect 160 acres on a working cattle ranch and farm. Protection of this property will preserve land near Lake Varner within the Cornish Creek Watershed which serves as the primary drinking water source for Walton and Newton Counties. The property also contains a small pond with a wading bird habitat as well as the 1843 gravesite of Susannah Huff, widow of a revolutionary war veteran. GLCP is contributing a \$120,000 grant. Additional funding is being provided by a federal farm bill grant and the property owner.

“I am delighted Governor Perdue has chosen Walton County for a land conservation grant. Since the county is facing strong growth, now is the time to set aside open land,” said Senator John Douglas. “As this historic property contains the gravesite of a Revolutionary War widow, it should be preserved for future generations. I applaud his action.”

In April 2005 Governor Perdue signed into law the Georgia Land Conservation Act, an initiative to encourage the long-term conservation and protection of Georgia’s natural, cultural and historic resources. The legislation established an initial trust fund and a revolving loan fund of \$100 million in state, federal and private funding, available to local governments and the Georgia Department of Natural Resources (DNR) for the purchase of conservation lands and conservation easements. An additional \$47.3 million in state funding was made available for this fiscal year (FY08). Thus far the program has endorsed 36 projects totaling almost 38,000 acres.

According to the Land Conservation Act, conservation lands are permanently protected lands that are undeveloped and meet one or more of the goals of the Land

Conservation Act. These goals include water quality protection, flood protection, wetlands protection, reduction of erosion, protection of riparian buffers and areas that provide natural habitat and corridors for native plant and animal species, protection of prime agricultural and forestry lands, protection of cultural and historic sites, scenic protection, recreation including boating, hiking, camping, fishing, and hunting and the connection of areas contributing to these goals.

Applications for land conservation grants or loans are accepted on a rolling basis throughout the year. Applications can be found at www.glcp.org.

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